

**"MURDERED BY ADVERTISEMENT."**

Patent-medicine horrors never reached a point of deeper degradation than in the yellow fever troubles of the south. Mr. Samuel H. Adams, whose series of articles will begin probably in five or six weeks, will hardly have anything more startling to narrate than the incredible performance of "Peruna" in alliance with the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*. This sheet has accomplished a feat of prostitution which, considering its pretense to respectability, probably sets the record. While the south is struggling to check a peril of the direst magnitude, this newspaper publishes an interview with "Dr. Hartman," with the familiar allegation that he "said in part," and all other devices to make it look like an important piece of news. Its headlines are: "How to Avoid Yellow Peril. An Interview With Dr. Hartman Concerning the Yellow Plague." To the reader this is the genuine opinion of a physician. He cannot know that Dr. Hartman is the head of the Peruna Company, and that the *Times-Democrat*, in whom the reader presumably has some trust, is selling itself and the safety of its constituents for a bag of gold. "A summary of this interview," the *Times-Democrat* informs us, "is being spread broadcast over the United States for the benefit of yellow fever sufferers." The gist of it is that, while screens and other precautions are advisable, Peruna should be taken at once and continued during the whole course of the epidemic. "I feel sure," the doctor went on to say (!), "that any person following this advice is in no danger of taking yellow fever." For anybody who believes we have taken too seriously the patent-medicine evil and newspaper complicity therein, this unspeakable outrage should be a lesson. Is there anything to which men cannot be led by money? To own a newspaper and hire it out to perilous fraud in an emergency like the yellow fever danger almost surpasses one's belief in human greed. No more disheartening proof of the need of the crusade which we have begun could possibly have been offered.—*Collier's*.

[*Collier's*, in the editorial here reprinted, uses the term "patent medicine" in the sense in which the public generally uses it. We beg to call attention, once more, to the fact that these preparations of the "Peruna" class are *not patented medicines*; they are simply nostrums advertised directly to the public. In this connection it is interesting to note that, according to some pharmacists in San Francisco, the sale of these so-called "patents"—really nostrums—has fallen off fully 50% in the last year or so. That is certainly encouraging.—*Ed.*]

*Collier's* has very justly and moderately scored the newspapers for this sort of murderous "write-up," and a number of medical journals have expressed their pleasure and their gratitude for the outspoken attack by *Collier's Weekly*. The same sort of thing is going on right along in many so-called medical journals, principally of the smaller class, and we sit supinely and utter never a word. Is there any material difference, so far as rankness is concerned, between the write-up of "Peruna" referred to by *Collier's* and the following write-up of "Tongaline" which appeared in the August issue of the *Mobile Medical and Surgical Journal*? If there is any such difference we should be delighted to have the *Mobile Medical and Surgical Journal* point it out to us:

"*Stegomyia fasciata* has produced an epidemic of yellow fever in certain sections of Louisiana and adjoining states.

"*Stegomyia punctata* has inoculated thousands with virulent malarial germs throughout the balance of the Mississippi Valley.

"Tongaline Mellier, in one of its forms as indicated, antagonizes and destroys the effects of these parasites on account of its extraordinary eliminative action on the liver, the bowels, the kidneys and the pores, whereby the poison is promptly and thoroughly expelled."

Do you believe it?

**NEXT!**

In the August issue of the JOURNAL, referring to the action of the House of Delegates at the Portland meeting, the following statement was published: "The first gun was fired on the afternoon session of Monday, when the Missouri delegation presented resolutions from their State Association calling for betterment in the *Journal's* advertising pages." Criticising this statement, the *St. Louis Medical Review* says:

In an editorial on the nostrum question, it states that the Missouri delegation presented resolutions at the Portland meeting "calling for betterment in the *Journal's* advertising pages"; meaning thereby the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Now these resolutions were framed at the annual meeting of the Missouri State Medical Association at Excelsior Springs by a specially appointed committee, consisting of the state delegates, Drs. Jabez N. Jackson, H. R. Keiffer and W. B. Dorsett. They were presented at Portland by Dr. Dorsett, on behalf of the committee, and the terms used consisted of a recommendation that the advertising of nostrums in the reading columns of medical journals\* [plural] should be deprecated and discountenanced. It appears, therefore, that the resolutions tendered by the Missouri committee have been so garbled by the CALIFORNIA STATE JOURNAL OF MEDICINE as to make them appear to support the animus constantly displayed by that organ against the editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. This, again, is not only inaccurate, it is dishonest; and it is keenly and justly resented by those whose actions are thus misrepresented and their convictions outraged.

The resolutions introduced by Dr. Dorsett, delegate from Missouri, are to be found at page 262 of the *Journal A. M. A.* for July 22d, and read as follows:

Whereas, The majority of so-called proprietary remedies are secret nostrums whose formulæ are unknown to the medical profession; and

Whereas, The use of such remedies stifles investigation of rational therapeutics and lowers the standard of our practice to mere empiricism; and

Whereas, The medical journals, the creatures of our profession, are filled with advertisements of these nostrums enlisting the attention of the unwary practitioner and resulting in enriching the manufacturer and defrauding the unsuspecting patient; therefore be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of this body that the use of these remedies by the members of the American Medical Association is reprehensible, and that these advertisements should not appear in reputable medical journals.

There are the resolutions exactly as published in the official minutes of the A. M. A.; please read them carefully, and they will disclose several interesting things.

First. Can anyone who is conversant with the advertising pages of the *Journal A. M. A.* for the past twenty years or less conscientiously deny that these resolutions called for betterment in its advertising pages?

Second. Can the gentlemen who are reported by the *St. Louis Medical Review* to have drawn up these resolutions deny that they had the *Journal A. M. A.* in mind as one of the journals needing reform?

Third. Can anyone find in these resolutions, as officially published by the Association, "a recommendation that the advertising of nostrums in the reading columns of medical journals should be deprecated and discountenanced"? If not, the phrase as given by the *St. Louis Medical Review* is unquestionably a substitution.

Fourth. Does it appear to any person of ordinary intelligence that the resolutions have been so garbled by us as to appear to support an attack upon the Editor of the *Journal A. M. A.*?

Fifth. The statement that this JOURNAL has "constantly displayed an animus against the editor of the *Journal A. M. A.*," is false. This JOURNAL has from the commencement of its criticisms of the *Journal A. M. A.* placed the responsibility where it belongs—with the Trustees; never but once has the editor of that journal been referred to in the pages of our JOURNAL, and on that occasion the statement was specifically made that he was not responsible.

One last word. We have not space in our JOURNAL to waste upon this sort of comment, and consequently there will be no further controversy with the highly imaginative *St. Louis Medical Review*. Your JOURNAL is getting, and is bound to get lots of this sort of criticism; indeed, a number of so-called medical jour-

\*Italics ours.